



## **Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board of Trustees**

Date: March 10, 2022  
Time: 8:30 AM – 10:00 AM  
Location: Conducted via remote participation

Attendees: Karen Kelleher, Phil Tedesco, Neal Mongold, Jaclyn Pacejo, Calpurnia Roberts, Eric Helmuth  
Staff: Jennifer Raitt, Kelly Lynema  
Guests: Jack Nagle, Jo Anne Preston

### **Minutes**

**1. Review and Approve Minutes of February 10, 2022 (5 minutes)**

Eric made a motion to approve. Jaclyn seconded. Unanimous vote to approve.

**2. Election of new Secretary (10 minutes)**

Tabled until next meeting.

**3. Orientation Topic: Arlington Housing Authority, Jack Nagle (45 minutes)**

Jack presented an overview of the mission, organizational structure, and properties managed by the Arlington Housing Authority (AHA). He described the AHA's management and distribution of Housing Choice Vouchers and in which municipalities recipients of vouchers live. He described the Family Self-Sufficiency Program, which enables families assisted by HUD to increase their earned income. Jack also provided an overview of the current waitlist for state-aided public housing, which is extensive.

He explained the AHA's maintenance and operating budgets, describing the proportion of their budget sourced from rent receipts, state annual formula funding, and state and local grant opportunities.

Recent capital improvement projects at the AHA include roof replacement at Cusack Terrace, window replacement and building envelope repairs at Winslow Towers, and exterior renovation of the Drake Village Cottages. The AHA has plans to address ongoing capital needs: \$600,000 from multiple sources for electrical panels, \$3.5m for upgrades to windows at Menotomy Manor.

The AHA currently has four tenant associations and holds monthly meetings with tenants and management. The AHA funds the tenant associations beyond the

minimum requirement to help them fund activities at their discretion. The organization also collaborates with Food Link, Arlington EATS, Arlington's Council on Aging, and provides language and after school programs at Menotomy Manor and Minuteman Senior Services at Drake Village.

## **Discussion**

Calpurnya asked about new projects and whether the AHA is looking to build more affordable housing. Jack said they are looking at potentially purchasing new units. In the past 5-10 years they purchased 5-10. There are no plans for any major housing projects.

Neal asked about the difference between HCVs and the Mass Rental Voucher program, and if we can get more used in Arlington. Jack explained that MRVP is funded through state and HCVs through the federal government. The AHA is interested in expanding voucher program. They are talking with Bedford about their VASH program.

Karen asked about whether there are ways we can work to keep more voucher recipients in Arlington to serve the affordable housing needs of Arlington residents. Jack responded that the program is mobile and provides options, and they can investigate whether vouchers are going to municipalities with lower or higher rents than Arlington, although he suspects both situations are happening. Regarding whether there are voucher holders in deed restricted affordable units, Jack was unsure if that data was available, but would talk with his staff. Regarding leveraging other resources, Karen noted that state-funded affordable housing is not adequately funded for capital improvements. She asked Jack for ideas about how the Trust can build a coalition around Arlington's housing needs, which includes preserving what we've got *and* creating more. Jack responded that he is excited about the Trust as an additional resource and that they share mutual goals. The AHA's goal is to create, maintain preserve affordable housing.

Eric asked what needs to happen structurally and who needs to be involved to produce more housing. He noted that preserving and maintaining our current affordable housing must be part of our long-range thinking. He asked whether voucher recipients must be given to current Arlington residents. Jack said anyone can apply, but to get preference you need to be a resident of or work in Arlington. Of all AHA voucher holders, 38% reside in Arlington. The benefit of voucher programs is the flexibility.

Jaclyn asked whether Jack had a sense for the how much it would cost to address the capital needs at all AHA properties. Jack said he doesn't have that amount for AHA, but MassMorrow, an advocacy group, did a campaign in the last year about importance of public housing. There is a link on AHA.org to understand financial needs.

Neal asked whether rental and choice vouchers count toward reaching Arlington's 10% subsidized housing inventory. Jenny responded no; to count toward Arlington's inventory the housing must be deed restricted affordable. Jack asked when the Trust anticipated being ready to receive applications for funding. Karen shared that the Trust does not currently have a dedicated source of funding. There is a home rule petition before the state legislature for approval on the real estate transfer fee, and we would appreciate Jack's assistance in advocating for this. Right now, the Trust has an award from CPA pending Town Meeting approval, as well as potential ARPA funding. She noted that the AHA and the Trust will be accessing the same resource pools, and that the Trust wants to anticipate AHA needs and plan for them. Jack said the AHA is revamping their five-year capital plan per state regulation. He will have a better sense for the AHA's needs in June. Their priority is to ensure that all preventative measures are addressed (fire alarm, electrical upgrades, etc. for maximum safety for residents).

Karen added that the Trust is going through an action planning process that will outline priorities for the next three to five years, and will engage with Jack, the AHA, HCA, and other bodies in town in that process.

Jo Anne asked whether the Trust will be hiring a consultant and if they would be in touch with Jack. She also asked about the sources of the Trust's current account balance. Jenny shared that the money was partially from when the Select Board dedicated funding to affordable housing as part of a disposition from the Symmes redevelopment. The other portion is from a payment in lieu of an affordable unit many years ago. Karen added that the scope of work for a consultant is being discussed. The Trust's goal is to develop an action plan in conjunction with ALL the bodies engaged in affordable housing in Arlington.

Eric added that the Trust is just starting out, and that the AHA is intentionally here at the beginning because the Trust is seeking a strategic partnership with all partners because there are multiple challenges to create, to maintain, and to preserve affordable housing.

Karen shared there are many steps left in the process to get the transfer fee approved. If the legislature approves, then it will go back to Town Meeting and the voters. The Trust will need help in creating the political will to invest in creating and preserving affordable housing.

#### **4. Action Plan Update (30 minutes)**

Karen reported that the Trust received only one proposal for the Action Plan. Some consultants she spoke with said that the scope was too broad, and some were not interested in the public engagement process. Others are simply not available due to their current workload. She proposed that the Trust move forward by taking on the first step of identifying goals and priorities on its own.

A working group of Jaclyn, Calpurnia, Neal, and Karen was established to work together to establish a framework for public engagement, establishing goals and priorities, and bringing that back to the Trust for review and approval. Members of the trust noted the importance of prioritizing the voices of those who need affordable housing in the engagement process. The working group's planning would help narrow the scope for hiring a consultant in a few months. This is to be done with the assumption that the overall timeframe for the development of the Action Plan is not changing.

Members of the Trust agreed with this approach. Karen added that she will reach out to Sue Doctrow of the CPA Committee to invite her to participate.

**Upcoming Meetings:** April 14, May 12, June 9, July 14, August 11, September 8, October 13, November 10, December 8